

## WHAT'S

keeping staff informed &amp; current

## Mike Carson committed to challenges

**S**tudying the patterns of disease occurring among the population to assist the community in prevention is what Mike Carson, Program Manager for HCA's Pulmonary Disease Services (PDS) and Epidemiology & Assessment (E&A) programs, clearly enjoys.

In his position within PDS, Mike oversees the operations of HCA's 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Westminster, and San Juan Capistrano TB Treatment and Prevention Services Clinics. In E&A, he manages the Birth & Death Registration unit and supervises a team of Epidemiologists. He additionally serves as a bioterrorism co-lead for the focus areas dealing with epidemiology and surveillance and the health alert network.

"With priorities that change with a phone call or e-mail, I am ready to tackle any new challenges that may arise," said Mike. He added that an infectious tuberculosis (TB) case in a school or a threat of bioterrorism can put a halt to day-to-day activities and force attention to a whole new set of issues.

After graduating from Ohio State University with a Master of Science degree in

Preventive Medicine, Mike accepted a position with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). While at the CDC, he was assigned to the Division of Tuberculosis Elimination as a Public Health Advisor working with cities, counties and states requesting aid. His first project was to provide technical assistance to the New York City Department of Health during a dramatic TB increase in 1993.

"Working in the Harlem District office provided me with an appreciation for the diversity of language, culture, and the challenges available in New York City," said Mike.

After spending two years on the East Coast, the CDC sent him to the West Coast to provide assistance to the Health Care Agency during an outbreak of multi-drug resistant TB at a local high school. After spending two years in Orange County while on assignment, Mike grew to enjoy

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## United Way 2003 is here!



HCA's booth drew long lines again at this year's United Way Kick-Off Rally held at the Hall of Administration on October 15<sup>th</sup>! Employees were eager to order a sample of Chinese food items, which included egg rolls, fried rice, chow mein, broccoli beef and chicken.

**Y**our gift will make a difference! Remember to complete and submit the United Way contribution or automatic payroll deduction forms that were recently distributed along with your October 10<sup>th</sup> paycheck by November 12<sup>th</sup>. Return the forms to your United Way coordinator or contact Ralph Dumke, Volunteer Services at (714) 796-0235 for more information.

A new feature this year allows employees to submit their pledge electronically. If you missed the e-mail regarding this capability, it will be redistributed on October 29<sup>th</sup>.

**T**he 2003 United Way fundraising campaign, following the theme "Enriching Lives ... Together," officially arrived during the first week of October. The start of the month marked a series of fundraising activities that various Health Care Agency programs sponsored. This year, some unique events included a "learn how to scrapbook and make crafts" session, sales of the Orange County Entertainment books, as well as sales of baked goods and breakfast burritos.

The annual County-wide kick-off rally was held on October 15<sup>th</sup> at the Hall of Administration Plaza. A multitude of County

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# Online Compliance Training scores big

**F**aster and more convenient! Those are just a few of the positive reviews received so far from HCA staff after trying the online version of annual Compliance program refresher training.

The online training is available to all HCA staff with access to a computer and the Internet or Intranet. Since the training program is narrated, the computer must have speakers or headphones so that you can follow user instructions. The annual Compliance program refresher training is found on the Intranet at <http://balsam/intranet/compliance/training.asp> and on the Internet at <http://www.ochealthinfo.com/training/>.

Here are eight simple rules to a successful online training experience:

**1. Read the directions**

Investing a few minutes reading the directions will help you better understand what you need to do to have a successful experience.

**2. Schedule 1 to 1½ hours to complete the online training course**

Typically, online training takes less time to complete than classroom training. Online Annual Compliance training can be completed in as little as 50 minutes depending on your learning style.

**3. Arrange for phone coverage**

Coordinate with your supervisor or coworkers to ensure you have an uninterrupted period of time to complete the online training.

**4. Exit all the programs in your PC before starting online training**

Close Outlook, Word, Excel and any other open programs. This will prevent distracting pop-up reminders while training and help your PC perform more efficiently.

**5. Audio needs**

Since the online training course is narrated you will need speakers. Depending on your work environment, headphones may help you focus, as well as prevent distracting your co-workers.

**6. Have pen and paper on hand**

Take notes and write down your questions. The "help" section of the online training course contains information on who to contact for guidance on specific issues.

**7. You must complete the entire online training course to get credit**

The online training course needs to be completed in one sitting. If you exit at any time during the program you will need to start again at the beginning.

**8. Keep your Certificate of Completion**

At the end of the online training course, you will complete an electronic Certificate of Completion. Make sure you print a copy for your records before exiting the page. When you click on "Certify" the Office of Compliance will receive your electronic Certificate of Completion, which will be kept on file.

Remember, training must be completed by November 26<sup>th</sup>!

## HCA helps shine the Hollywood spotlight on important topic

**S**everal HCA staff members recently attended a Hollywood premiere for the debut of a dramatic and state-of-the-art DVD aimed at preventing jail suicides.

The Television Academy of Arts and Sciences hosted the premier of "On Your Watch," a two-part training product that tells the stories of several individuals who attempted to commit suicide while in custody. HCA's Interim Administrative Manager for Correctional Medical Services, Kevin Smith, has been involved in the two-year effort to produce the DVD through his participation on the Forensic Subcommittee of the California Mental Health Director's Association.

The task given the group was to facilitate training on suicide prevention for correctional officers and health care staff. They enlisted Hollywood producer Dan Weisburd in the effort, and the result is a professionally produced DVD that is available for purchase from the California Institute of Mental Health. The series teaches suicide prevention techniques through vignettes based on composite experiences from across the state. Each story provides a glimpse of the individual's life before they went to jail, the circumstances that led to their arrest and the events that occurred in custody. "On Your Watch" also includes an instructional CD-ROM, with continuing education credit available for certain licensed personnel. For his involvement in the project, Smith received a screen credit as the editor and producer of the instructional CD-ROM, and he also appears in one of the vignettes.

**The HCA Compliance Program offers a confidential telephone hotline to voice your concerns about any situation that may conflict with Compliance Program principles. You may call the hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at:**

**(866) 260-5636**

### NOVEMBER HEALTH OBSERVANCES

American Diabetes Month

Lung Cancer Awareness Month

National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

National Epilepsy Month

National Hospice Month

National Marrow Awareness Month

Great American Smokeout . . . . . 20

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) Awareness Week . . . . . 23-29



## Hat's Off to HCA's Nurse Practitioners



**I**n honor of Nurse Practitioner's Week during November 2-8, the Health Care Agency's Nurse Practitioners (NPs) will celebrate the event at a networking gathering on Monday October 27<sup>th</sup> at the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Clinic. NPs from various service areas will join in the festivities as they celebrate and honor their co-workers.

The Health Care Agency honors all of its NPs during this week of recognition. Thank you for your dedication in helping the Orange County community lead healthy and safe lives!

Nurse Practitioners pictured in the back row (left to right) are Betty Bogar and Andrea Anzalone. Pictured in the front row (left to right) are Nancy Pinedjian, Lyvia Villegas and Charmaine West.

## Flu Season has arrived

**T**he month of October marks the start of influenza (flu) season. For your protection, consider being inoculated with the flu vaccine, which can prevent flu illness in 70-90% of healthy people.

Those who are over 60 years of age, or who have a chronic medical condition including lung disease, heart disease, metabolic disorders, kidney disease or immune-suppression are at an increased risk of flu complications and should receive the flu vaccine. Qualifying individuals may contact the Health Care Agency's Health Referral Line at (800) 564-8448 for more information on receiving the vaccine free of charge through the Public Health Immunization program.

Other interested individuals may also contact their physician's office or obtain the vaccine through some local pharmacies and many other convenient locations in the community for a reasonable cost, usually under \$20. Visit [www.findaflushot.com](http://www.findaflushot.com) online to find a participating location near you. Some County health plans, including Kaiser Permanente and CIGNA, will provide the flu vaccine at no additional costs to members.

This year, HCA Employee Health Services located at 405 W. 5th Street, Ste. 601 in Santa Ana offers employees the chance to receive the vaccine during specified dates for a cost of \$11. Call Employee Health Services at (714) 834-5974 for flu shot clinic times. Several Public Health Clinics will also offer the flu vaccine for employees through the end of November. For locations, dates and times, call the Agency's Health Referral Line at (800) 564-8448. Don't worry, you still have time, as the best months to receive the vaccine are during October and November.

## New change to CHDP program

**T**he Child Health and Disability Program (CHDP) targets low-income children and youth by providing them with no cost preventive health assessments offered by a large network of CHDP providers, and immunizations. The program is a safety net for children and youth who do not have access to either Medi-Cal or Healthy Families.

Now, with the new CHDP Gateway, the program allows children and youth to become eligible for Medi-Cal or Healthy Families. The current CHDP eligibility information application will be enhanced to become the "CHDP Pre-Enrollment Application." If eligible, children enrolled into Gateway will receive presumptive eligibility (PE), no cost, full-scope, fee-for-service Medi-Cal. Using an automated pre-enrollment process, CHDP providers can enroll children into the CHDP Gateway program and receive an immediate response, pending submission of a formal application.

Services covered by PE are only available for a short period of time while the Medi-Cal and Healthy Families application is reviewed. In order to continue receiving regular screenings, diagnosis and treatment, an application for Medi-Cal/Healthy Families must be completed and mailed. The instructions for completing and mailing an application will be generated and mailed to the child's residence after a CHDP provider visit.

For more information about the new changes, call the Orange County CHDP Program at (714) 834-8665 or visit them on the web at [www.ochealthinfo.com/mcah](http://www.ochealthinfo.com/mcah).

## Team Excellence Awards deadline draws near

**D**on't forget to submit your nominations for the 2003 Bi-Annual Team Excellence Awards by December 1<sup>st</sup>. This award was created to recognize teams that exemplify the principals of Enlightened Leadership and Team Excellence in creative and collaborative action and to identify the qualities and characteristics of effective work teams.

Visit HCA's employee intranet at <http://balsam/intranet/lmc/team.asp> for nomination information and forms.



*HCA's Contract Development and Management staff were winners of HCA's United Way Jeopardy Fundraising Challenge held on October 14<sup>th</sup>. Quality Management came in close second and will serve as the alternate during the County-wide Jeopardy game on October 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. Pictured (left to right) are Debbie Box, David Francis, Barbara Voelkel, and Rob Balma.*

## Spotlight on Excellence

**B**ehavioral Health's Cultural Competency Program presented its September "Spotlight on Excellence" Award to Benito Paredes of Adult Mental Health. Benito began his career with the County in March 2002 as a Community Worker and served as a Drug Court Counselor for two years. Currently, Benito is employed as a Bilingual Mental Health Counselor for the County's Narcotic Replacement Treatment Program. Benito was recognized for his understanding that native language and culture does not necessarily translate into cultural competency. He strives to educate himself regarding other cultures to better serve the diverse populations of Orange County.

*Pictured (left to right) are, Brett O'Brien, Veronica Kelley, Benito Paredes and Jean Wiley.*



### Gold Star

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Southern California's weather and activities. He adds that the high-caliber professional staff he worked with at HCA left quite a memorable impression on him.

Duty called once again, and Mike was sent back to the East to assist the Florida State Department of Health TB Program, where he managed the county TB programs in central and southwest Florida.

"Tallahassee was not quite the hub of activity I was used to after living in New York City and Orange County," said Mike. "And, tired of moving every two-years, and missing the climate and friendships forged in Orange County, I was looking for the opportunity to return."

After a friend's recommendation, Mike soon found an opportunity to work for HCA and began his County career in 1998 as a Senior Epidemiologist within the Communicable Disease Control & Epidemiology program, now referred to as Epidemiology & Assessment. After serving 5 years in his position, Mike was promoted to Program Manager in 2003.

"I am proud to see the growth of the Epidemiologist series in HCA," said Mike. "Since being hired as the first non-physician Epidemiologist in 1998, I have seen the ranks increase to three Senior Epidemiologists and nine Epidemiologists providing support to our programs. I am also proud of instituting Medi-Cal billing as an additional source of revenues for PDS."

With an extensive background in epidemiology and disease control, Mike is acknowledged for his dedication and pro-

fessionalism in assisting the Orange County community in disease prevention and control. According to his colleagues, he is recognized as an efficient and organized worker, fair-minded, a problem-solver and a producer of high quality work.

"I have a strong commitment to public health and anticipate a continued rewarding and exciting career with HCA," Mike said.

Aside from work, Mike enjoys spending time with his family and adds that on a personal note, Thu, the "friend" who encouraged him to return to Orange County, is currently his wife of four years. Mike and Thu are also the proud parents of a five-month old son, Eric, who provides additional opportunities for him to multitask out of the office as well.

### United Way

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agencies volunteered at booths by selling everything from fresh food items, candy treats, arts and crafts to opportunity drawing tickets and silent auctions to help raise funds for United Way. The event drew a large crowd again this year and brought another long line of hungry staffers to HCA's booth, which featured a menu of Chinese food items including chow mein, egg rolls and fried rice.

Special thanks to all HCA programs and employees who provided generous support and participation in making this year's United Way Campaign yet another huge success! Here's looking forward to another successful event next year.

## Save the date for WIC Open House

**T**he Women, Infants & Children's (WIC) program will host an open house on Wednesday, October 29<sup>th</sup> from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. to celebrate the grand opening of their new clinic in Fountain Valley. The new clinic located at 8570 Warner Avenue will offer expanded services to serve both the Fountain Valley and Huntington Beach communities.

Come join in the festivities and tour the new facility! The open house will feature an opportunity to meet WIC staff and a chance to learn about the various services the program provides. For more information about WIC and the Fountain Valley Clinic Open House, call (714) 834-8333. Information about WIC is also available online at [www.oc.ca.gov/hca/public/nutrition/wic.htm](http://www.oc.ca.gov/hca/public/nutrition/wic.htm).

health care agency  
**WHAT'S UP**  
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**WHAT'S UP** is a newsletter for employees of the County of Orange, CA, Health Care Agency.

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